Survey of availability of atomic and nuclear minerals

2173. DR. V. MAITREYAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has surveyed the Atomic and Nuclear minerals availability in the country;

(b) if so, the details of the study;

(c) whether Government is aware of the fact that lot of minerals like Uranium, Thorium, Molyblendum are found in soils in the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu and Kerala; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to exploit them and to curb the robberies being done by sand quaries in these areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir. The Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD) of the Department of Atomic Energy is engaged in survey, exploration and evaluation of Atomic and Nuclear Minerals of Uranium, Thorium, Niobium, Tantalum, Beryllium, Zirconium and Lithium required for the Atomic Energy Programme of the Country.

(b) AMD has so far established about 1,07,268 tonnes of *insitu* Uranium resources (U_3O_8), 461.30 million tonnes of ilmenite, 26.82 million tonnes of rutile, 16.07 million tonnes of leucoxene, 28.29 million tonnes of zircon, 10.21 million tonnes of monazite, 150.63 million tonnes of garnet and 190.31 million tonnes of sillimanite.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. AMD has identified about 3.21 million tonnes of Thorium Minerals Monazite. No significant concentration of Molybdenum is noticed in beach sands of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The Indian Rare Earth Ltd. (IREL), a Public Sector Undertaking of this Department has mining and mineral separation plants to produce monazite (which is a phosphate of uranium, thorium and rare earths) along with other minerals *viz.* ilmenite, rutile, zircon, sillimanite and garnet from the coastal areas of Manavalakurichi located in Tamil Nadu near Kanyakumari and at Chavara located in Kerala. Under the policy for exploration of Beach sand minerals certain Private parties are engaged in Mineral Separation, but not for Uranium, Thorium and Molybdenum. No cases of robberies of Uranium, Thorium and Molybdenum by sand quarries in the coastal areas of Kerala & Tamil Nadu were reported.

Uranium mines in India

2174. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of progress made under Atomic Mineral Division for identifying uranium mines in India during the last 30 years and the number of uranium mines functioning in the country as on date, location-wise; and

(b) the details of the funds released for mining Uranium during the years 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 showing the quantum of uranium explored, mine-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration & Research (AMD), a constituent unit under the Department of Atomic energy (DAE) has established about 1,07,268 tonnes of insitu uranium (U_3O_8) reserves spread across ten States. After assessing commercial viability, mining is taken up by Uranium Corporation of India Limited (UCIL), a Public Sector Undertaking of the Department. At present, UCIL operates five

mines at Jaduguda, Bhatin, Narwapahar, Turamdih and Banduhurang in the Singhbhum (East) district, Jharkhand State.

(b) The details of funds released for mining uranium are as follows:

2004-2005	:	Rs. 135.50 crores
2005-2006	:	Rs. 57.05 crores
2006-2007	:	Rs. 21.705 crores

It is not public interest to disclose the quantum of uranium explored mine wise.

Uranium reserves

2175. MISS MABEL REBELLO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of uranium reserves in the country;

(b) the amount of uranium processed annually in Jharkhand;

(c) what happens to the residual products; give details of its disposal;

(d) the other locations in the country where uranium is processed; and

(e) the quantum of uranium processed in each of the locations and disposal of waste therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration & Research (AMD), a constituent unit of the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) has so far established about 1,07,268 tonnes of in-situ uranium (U_3O_8) resources.

(b) It is not in public interest to disclose information on the quantity of uranium processed in the country.

(c) After processing of ore and extraction of uranium and other by-products, the residual products are neutralized and separated into to size fractions. the sand fractions (about 40% of the residual product) are sent to underground mines for back filling in the form of slurry. The slime fractions are stored in a well engineered impoundment facility — called tailing pond.

(d) Uranium ore is not processed in other locations in the country.

(e) Does not arise.

Coal availability

2176. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether coal availability would affect power generation and other industries;

(b) whether, it is a fact that Government imported 12 million tons of coal in 2004-05 and 22 million tons of coal in 2005-06;

(c) the estimates of coal imports in 2006-07 and the probable imports in 2007-08;

(d) the production bottlenecks at coal mines; and